

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-11, 13-15 and 18-21 were previously pending in the present application. Claims 14-15 and 20 are hereby cancelled. Claims 1, 3-11, 13, 18-19 and 21 are now pending. Reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested in light of above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

Claims 15 and 20 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c) for not further limiting the scope of independent claim 11. These claims, and also claim 14, have now been cancelled to obviate the objection.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1 and 3-10 were previously allowed, and previously pending claims 17-20 were previously deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form, which resulted in claim 11 as it now reads.

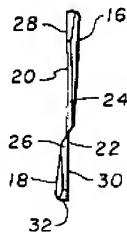
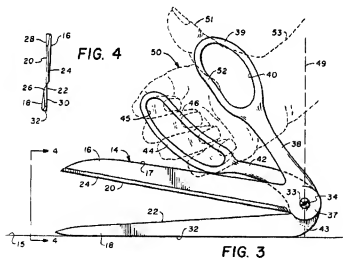
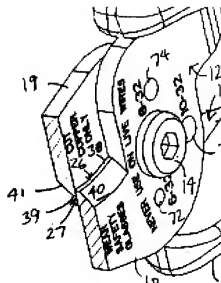
However, in the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1 and 3-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Jeske *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 6,684,439) and the newly cited Leibowitz reference (U.S. Pat. No. 4,507,864). Additionally, claim 11 (and claims 13 and 14) were again rejected as obvious in view of the Jeske *et al.* and Gomas (U.S. Pat. No. 6,134,994). Claim 21 was also rejected as being obvious in view of the combination of Jeske *et al.*, Gomas and Lu (U.S. Pat. No. 6,513,198).

1. Claims 1 and 9 and Dependents

Claims 1 and 9 (and dependents) recite a wire stripper with two distinct cutting surfaces. As previously recognized by the Office, the prior art of record does not disclose this. The newly cited Leibowitz reference adds nothing in this regard. To more clearly illustrate a wire stripper as defined by claims 1 and 9, one preferred embodiment disclosed by applicants will be discussed in reference to the figures reproduced below. The following figure shows an enlarged view of the cutting end of the wire strippers shown in FIG. 3 of the present application.

As shown, the disclosed jaws 18 and 19 of the disclosed wire stripper each have working edges 26 and 27 defined by two acutely angled cutting surfaces 38 and 40 and 39 and 41, respectively. Thus, each jaw has two cutting surfaces, both of which are angled with respect to and separate from the flat sides of the jaws (where the words are located).

In contrast, the Leibowitz reference, which was cited for a teaching of two cutting surfaces, in fact only has a single cutting surface on each blade. As illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4 reproduced below, that reference teaches a cutting shears with two blades 16 and 18, each having a single cutting edge 20 and 22 defined by a beveled surface 24 and 26 which is angled with respect to its flat side 28 and 30, respectively.



Thus, the single cutting edge of each blade is located at the edge of the single beveled surface. The flat sides of the blade are not cutting surfaces. The flat sides would correspond to the area where the writing is located in the embodiment of applicants' invention shown above, since that area is not used for cutting, but

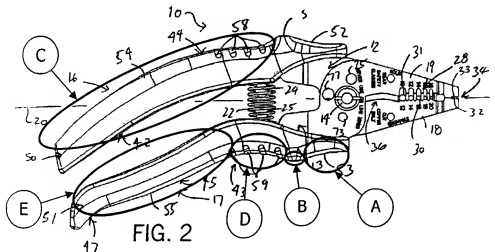
rather is a dull side wall of the blade. None of the cited references teach or suggest two beveled surfaces, and corresponding cutting edges, (in addition to the flat side) per blade, but instead merely a single cutting surface, and cutting edge, and one flat side per blade.

Applicants thus ask that the latest rejection be withdrawn and that claims 1 and 9 and their dependents once again be allowed.

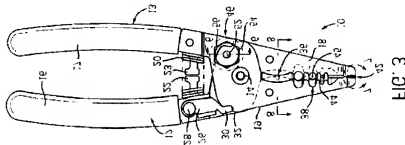
2. Claim 11 and Dependents

Claim 11 and its dependents recite that the wire stripper has two lever members each with an elongated handle. Each handle has a rear grip and a forward grip (A) separated by an outward extension (B). The forward grips extend forward from the outward extensions toward the hinge point and are concave opening in a direction away from a centerline so as to receive a thumb and forefinger of a user. The rear grip of one handle is generally concave toward the centerline (C). The rear grip of the other handle has a first segment adjacent the outward extension that is concave away from the centerline (D) and a second segment adjacent the first segment that is concave toward the centerline (E).

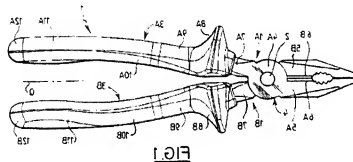
To more clearly illustrate what is being claimed and how that is different from that taught by the cited prior art, the above preferred embodiment of the wire stripper disclosed in the present application will again be discussed here. As shown, the elements identified above are circled in FIG. 2 of the application reproduced below.



In this regard, the device disclosed by Jeske *et al.* merely has two symmetric curved handles, as shown in the FIG. 3 thereof reproduced (and reoriented) as shown below.



While the Jeske *et al.* reference was cited for its base teaching of a wire stripper. The Gomas reference was cited for teaching the handle structure claimed in claim 11. However, as can be seen in FIG. 1 of the Gomas reference reproduced below, the disclosed device does not suggest the claimed wire stripper, even when combined with Jeske *et al.*



For one thing, the Gomas device does not have forward grips as claimed. Claim 11 recites that the forward grips are separated from the rear grips by an outward extension and extend forward from the outward extensions toward the hinge point. The outwardly extending guard features of the Gomas device essential define the forward end handle, such that there is no grip portion of anytime forward of the guards, that is closer to the hinge point. The Office takes the tenuous position that

the sharply angled forward surface of the guard is a "forward grip," yet it cannot be because claim 11 requires that the forward grips to be concave so as to receive the thumb and forefinger of a user. The Office asserts that the sharp rearward concave surface of the guard corresponds to the first concave segment of the second rear grip claimed. However, this surface is merely the transition between the guard and the grip, which by itself follows a simple curve, like that in Jeske *et al.*, and does not constitute an area of inflection in the grip itself.

For these reasons, claim 11 and its dependent are not believed to be rendered obvious by the combined teaching of Jeske *et al.* and Gomas.

Conclusion

All pending claims 1, 3-11, 13, 18-19 and 21 are believed to be allowable. Allowance of these claims is thus respectfully requested.

No fees are believed necessary for consideration of this response, however, any fees deemed necessary should be charged to Deposit Account 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,
Craig Wilson, *et al.*

Date: 2/16/2007

By: 

Steven J. Wietzky
Reg. No. #4,402
Attorney for Applicant
Quarles & Brady LLP
411 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 277-5415